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BANK OF ENGLAND HIKES RATES BY 25 BPS, NO LONGER SEES RECESSION

BoE raised interest rates to their highest level since 2008 and revised its projections to now exclude the possibility of a UK recession this year

12TH HIKE IN A ROW, ACTION ON EXPECTED LINES

The decision by the central bank's monetary policy committee to lift its main interest rate from 4.25% to 4.5% was widely anticipated in financial markets. The rise was its 12th in a row. BoE started raising rates in late 2021 from a low of 0.1% to keep a lid on price rises. The central bank expects inflation to fall to the targeted band of 2% by late 2024 from a high of 10.1% now

INFLATION TO HALVE BY END OF YEAR: GUV

- "Inflation is on course to halve by the end of this year but our focus is on returning inflation to 2%," said BoE governor Andrew Bailey
- Higher interest rates help lower inflation by making it more expensive for households and businesses to borrow. In other words, household will potentially spend less, reducing upside demand pressure on prices

5.1%

MONETARY POLICY COMMITTEE'S LATEST PROJECTION OF INFLATION BY YEAR-END

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TIRUCHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

Imran freed, to appear before HC

Pakistan Supreme Court terms the ex-PM's arrest illegal; 47 dead in clashes, say police

YESHI SELI @ New Delhi

THE Pakistan Supreme Court on Thursday termed former prime minister Imran Khan's arrest illegal and ordered his immediate release. The ruling was given in the presence of Khan, who was produced before the court.

Chief Justice Umar Ata Bandial said the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf chief be kept at the Police Lines Guest House but not as a prisoner.

Police have been ordered to provide security to Khan, who will appear before the Islamabad High Court on Friday to seek further legal recourse. "You will have to accept whatever the high court decides," Bandial told Khan.

While staying at the police guest house, Khan can meet a maximum of 10 people.

At the outset of the hearing, the chief justice questioned the legality of the arrest asking how can a person be picked up from the premises of a court without its permission.

Khan told the top court that he was abducted from the high court on Tuesday and subjected to physical assault.

On the violent protests following his arrest, the PTI chief claimed he had no clue about what was happening on the streets as he was under detention. "How am I responsible for the protests?" he asked. Accepting the chief justice's suggestion, Khan appealed to the protesters to remain peaceful. "We only want elections in the country," he told the Supreme Court.

Political reaction to the SC ruling was mixed. While PTI welcomed the verdict, Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz's chief organiser Maryam Nawaz Sharif was caustic. "The chief justice was very happy today to release a criminal," she said, adding that this showed the chief justice was responsible for the attacks that followed Khan's arrest.

Meanwhile, data released by the Punjab police on Thursday revealed that as many as 47 PTI supporters were killed during the violent clashes.

Imran Khan enters the Supreme Court of Pakistan, in Islamabad on Thursday | AMI

ARREST MOST FOUL

Slamming the arrest, the SC said: "What dignity remains of the court if 90 people entered its premises? How can any individual be arrested from court premises?"

RACE TO SOUDHA

Busy 'Big 3' chalk out plans to form govt

DEVARAJ B HIREHALLI @ Bengaluru

A DAY after polling, a flurry of activity was witnessed in Congress, BJP and JDS camps, all three parties hoping to be in a beneficial position to form government or to be part of it.

Congress, riding on what the exit polls indicated, has an edge and is confident of forming government after winning a clear majority, although BJP, too, has been exuding such confidence. Many exit polls have predicted a fractured mandate. But the real picture will be out on Saturday when results will be announced.

While Congress leaders went into a huddle, BJP and JDS were busy chalking out strategies, considering various outcomes. BJP is not ruling out formation of government with JDS if it falls short of the magic number (113 seats).

AICC general secretary Randeep Singh Surjewala held talks with CLP leader Siddaramaiah for about two hours at the latter's residence. They discussed various strategies on government formation in case of a fractured mandate, sources said. Later, Surjewala held a virtual meeting with leaders, including DK Shivakumar, the party's front-runner for CM's post.

According to a source, Congress is considering wooing independents and candidates from other parties, who are sure of winning if it falls short by 4-5 seats. "Congress may get ready for an operation if it falls short of the required seats and its leaders are all prepared," the source said. Independent candidate from Gauribidanur Puttaswamy Gowda and NCP candidate from Ranebennur R Shankar, among others, are said to be on the Congress' list as they are likely to win, sources said.

A Congress leader said, "Congress leadership will move briskly to form government and if the situation demands, it may shift its MLAs to a resort to prevent poaching by BJP." P4

KARNATAKA POLLS 2023 DECIDE

Chef's death: City police still clueless

PRAVEEN KUMAR @ Bengaluru

POLICE are yet to achieve a breakthrough in a case where the charred body of a 48-year-old man with one of his hands and legs chained to a cot was found in the flat where he was living at Rajankunte on the outskirts of the city on May 3.

It is said that the police could not proceed with the investigation because they were busy with election duty.

The deceased, Sanjay Krishnan, hailed from Kerala and was working as a chef in a private university at Rajankunte. The flat was provided to him by the university. Victim's brother Bijay Krishnan, suspecting foul play, filed a police complaint on May 4, and a murder case was registered.

Bijay suspects that some unknown persons escaped after killing his brother. "It is yet to be asertained whether it is a case of murder or suicide. There was no sign of forcible entry. CCTVs footage do not show anybody coming out of the flat. Krishnan might have chained himself before setting himself ablaze. His left hand wasn't chained. We suspect that he set himself ablaze with his left hand," said an officer.

Eknath Shinde survives as Uddhav threw in towel

SHRUTI KAKKAR @ New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Thursday kept the disqualification door open against Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde for defecting from the parent Shiv Sena, but ruled it cannot reinstate his predecessor Uddhav Thackeray as he had resigned as CM before taking a floor test.

A five-judge bench comprising Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud and justices M R Shah, Krishna Murari, Hima Kohli and P S Narasimha lobbed the disqualification petitions ball — pending against Shinde and 15 other rebel Sena MLAs — to the Maharashtra Speaker for adjudication. The court faulted the appointment of Shinde loyalist Bharat Gogawale as the Sena's Chief Whip when the rebellion was at its peak, saying only a political party and not the legislature party can make the appointment.

In other words, it indicated Uddhav's choice as Chief Whip was kosher. "To hold that it is the legislature party which appoints the Whip would be to sever the figurative umbilical cord which connects a member of the House to the political party," the court said.

The bench left it to the Speaker to recognise the Whip and the leader of the Sena's legislature party after an enquiry.

On Uddhav's resignation, the bench said: "Had Mr Thackeray refrained from resigning from the post of the Chief Minister, this court could have considered the grant of the remedy of reinstating the government headed by him." P9

SC PUTS DISQUALIFICATION BALL BACK IN SPEAKER'S COURT

- Ex-Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari did not objective material before him to decide that Uddhav had lost the confidence of the House
- Governor asking Uddhav to face a floor test was not in accordance with law
- Speaker's decision to appoint Shinde's man as the party's whip in the Assembly was contrary to law
- But Governor's decision to invite Shinde to form a new govt was justified
- Bench could have considered reinstating Uddhav govt if he had not resigned as CM
- **2016** Nabam Rebia verdict on the Speaker's power regarding disqualification of MLAs referred to a larger bench of seven judges
- No extraordinary circumstances for SC to adjudicate disqualification petitions. Speaker must decide them within a reasonable period
- Political party, not the legislature party, appoints Whip and Leader of the party in the House. Speaker's **July 3, 2022** decision to appoint Shinde's man as the party's whip in the Assembly illegal

EXPRESS READ

'Possibility of Pakistan not playing in ODI WC'

Pakistan Cricket Board chairman Najam Sethi has told BBC that if the hybrid model he had proposed for the upcoming 2023 Asia Cup does not go forward, there is a possibility of their government not allowing them travel to India for the ODI World Cup that is scheduled for October | P13

Shortage of vets cripples K'taka forest department

BOSKY KHANNA @ Bengaluru

THE forest department is finding it difficult to handle cases of man-animal conflict and launch rescue operations due to a severe shortage of veterinarians.

The department now has only three veterinarians on deputation. Forest officials said the department has only three veterinarians as against the sanctioned 11 posts.

The three veterinarians are working in Bandipur, Nagarahole and BRT tiger reserves. Apart from them, a veterinarian has been posted at Bannerghatta wildlife rescue centre and another at Shivamogga circle - Dr Vinay, who is undergoing treatment in a private hospital in Bengaluru after he was attacked by a wild elephant during a rescue operation.

A senior forest official admitted to the crisis and said that all tiger reserves, wildlife sanctuaries, national parks and forest circles need veterinarians. So going by the requirement, there is a need for at least 45 veterinarians.

The department gets veterinarians on deputation from the animal husbandry department for five years. Later based on their performance and department's requirement, their tenure is extended or new veterinarians received on deputation. CONTINUED ON: P5

1:40 nurse to patient ratio

Victoria Hospital has 316 nurses officers working with a 1:40 nurse to patient ratio, said Kavitha N, nursing superintendent, meaning nurses are often overworked.

REPORT: P3

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DFRL INNOVATION

'Antifreeze' fresh food for troops in Siachen

KARTHIK KK @ Mysuru

SCIENTISTS of Mysuru-based Defence Food Research Laboratory (DFRL) have come up with "antifreeze container" technology which helps armed forces in high altitude areas tackle the problem of "rock-hard" eggs, "juice bricks" and frozen fruits and vegetables which become unfit for consumption.

The technology developed under the guidance of Dr Anil Dutt Semwal, Director of DFRL, has cleared all trials. If everything goes as per DRFL plans, it will be implemented this year. After videos of soldiers deployed in Siachen breaking "rock-hard" eggs, "tomatoes" and "juice bricks" went viral a few years ago, DFRL scientists started working on this technology.

In high-altitude areas, temperature tends to freeze fruits and vegetables during transportation from depot to forward posts, making them unfit for consumption.

Antifreeze container

"With this antifreeze insulated container, fruits and vegetables can be transported or stored. The container can retain freshness without any symptoms of freezing and chilling injury for almost 90 hours. The structural integrity of the container with minimum heat loss needs no electrical energy," said a scientist, who is part of the team which developed this technology.

The team is now working on extending this technology to armed forces deployed in high-altitude areas, especially in Siachen.

Scientists of DFRL have also developed proto models of "antifreeze flexible bags or sacks" that work without electrical energy.